Web Exercises

# Chapter 7: Creating a Vision

## What Matters More than Your Talents

Ask students to watch Jeff Bezos’ commencement address at Princeton University at *TED talks* (<http://www.ted.com/talks>). Have them reflect on the following questions, in writing or in small group discussions:

* What lesson did Bezos learn from his grandfather?
* How does following one’s passion relate to leadership vision?
* What have been the most significant choices you’ve made in your life? How have they changed your life?
* Is it possible for everyone to “build themselves a great story?” Why or why not? How does this concept relate to one’s philosophy about the nature of people?

## Leadership and Change

Ask students to listen to the podcast by Parker Palmer on “Leadership and Change” at the Center for Courage and Renewal website (<http://www.couragerenewal.org>), which takes about 8 minutes. In writing or in small group discussions address the following topics:

* Palmer uses three verbs to describe leading for change: Constellate, consolidate, and give trajectory to. Explain how the types of action differ and how each action contributes to leadership vision.
* What is involved in the act of “choosing” to change within? Where can leaders find “free and safe spaces” to do the inner work of leadership?
* What sources of social support are available to students in their varied leadership roles? Does every leader need a community of support?
* Palmer argues that in public leadership “you have to tuck a bunch of stuff away,” leading to compartmentalization of private and public life. Is this a virtue or pathology?

## Greater Good

The University of California at Berkeley sponsors an outreach program called “Greater Good; Science of a Meaningful Life.” It offers many resources for instructors, including essays, videos and podcasts, online quizzes and slide presentations. This link features videos by Philip Zimbardo on heroism, and heroism vs. evil. According to Zimbardo, heroic action is (1) engaged in voluntarily; (2) is conducted in service to one or more people; (3) involves a risk to physical comfort, social status or quality of life; and (4) is initiated without the expectation of material gain. Class discussion questions could include: What is the relationship between leadership and heroism? How is heroic imagination similar to leadership vision?

<http://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/what_makes_a_hero>

## Skills Coaching

Have students look up the various coaching articles at Marshall Goldsmith’s website <http://www.marshallgoldsmithlibrary.com.> Clicking on the “articles” link will pull up free articles, which are recommended to be read in sequence. All are useful, but if time is limited, choose “Leadership is a Contact Sport” or “Leaders Make Values Visible.” Assign the following questions for written reflection or class discussion:

Leadership is a Contact Sport

* What are the four key findings from this study?
* Explain the results of Exhibits 1 – 5
* How does follow-up relate to articulating a vision? Implementing a vision?

Leaders Make Values Visible

* Do you agree with Goldsmith that many corporate vision statements lack integrity?
* How does the Johnson and Johnson credo fit the four parts of “Articulating a Vision” in chapter 7 of our textbook?
* What did Morgan and Goldsmith find out about vision in their study of 11,000 managers in 8 major corporations?

## Creativity and Vision

For many people, the biggest obstacle to visionary leadership is imagining a preferred future state. This involves seeing the current reality in a different way or thinking completely “outside the box.” Creativity capacity can be enhanced. Ask students to visit Michael Michalko’s website, [http://creativethinking.net](http://creativethinking.net/), which has a number of resources, exercises, and articles related to enhancing creativity. Several assignments could be developed from the site. You might ask students to…

* Select one or more of the exercises and reflect upon the experience.
* Read one or more of the blog entries, considering how they relate to leadership and developing vision.

## Full Engagement Training Program

Look online for the “Full Engagement Plan Summary” pdf which summarizes the main ideas of Loehr & Schwartz’s full engagement program, mentioned in chapter 7 and also available as a book.

The summary is lengthy, but useful for the instructor to skim and gain ideas from, such as what it means to live a fully engaged life, and how physical and mental health go hand in hand. Loehr and Schwartz’s claim is that our most precious resource isn’t time, but energy. To be fully engaged involves being physically energized, emotionally connected, mentally focused, and spiritually aligned. In class discuss:

* How leaders can balance these parts of their lives,
* How to stay emotionally connected with followers,
* How full engagement might enhance a leader’s ability to develop vision, and
* Can one lead effectively without being fully engaged?

## Inspiring Speeches

Have students look up “inspiring speeches in movies” on YouTube and show their favorite clips in class. This can be done for one entire class session or spread over several class periods as opening exercises. Some well-known examples are (high school football) Coach Boone’s speech at Gettysburg in “Remember the Titans” and (U. S. Olympic hockey team) Coach Herb Brooks’ locker room speech in “Miracle.” But there are many more. Have students analyze what makes the speech visionary. How does it adapt to the audience? Does it use special language, vocabulary, or tone? What symbols are used? What can we learn and use from this example, or is it situation-limited? Are there any inspiring leadership speeches by women in Hollywood films?

## Searching for Symbols

Have students use Google Images to look up photos that depict a metaphor for leadership that they find effective, such as “climbing a mountain” or “running your own race” or similar. Alternatively, they can look for images that speak to them in some way and may inspire them to find a symbol or metaphor that captures their idea of leadership or the challenge of leadership. These can be shared in class or posted on a class blog.

## Inspiring Change

In a *TED Talk* from 2009, Simon Sinek presents a rationale that explains how leaders inspire change (<http://www.ted.com/talks/simon_sinek_how_great_leaders_inspire_action.html>). Have students watch this video and discuss the following questions:

* What is the “golden circle”?
* What is the key question according to Sinek?
* Why is belief so important in Sinek’s view?
* How does this relate to creating vision?